

**SECRET**

4 November 1944.

Dear Willoughby,

Thanks for your consideration and thoughtfulness in sending me a personal copy of the progress report of the Allied Translator and Interpreter Section, South West Pacific Area. It is a very useful document and brings up to date the information on ATIS which I received during my visit.

It is useful too in that it will let me bring to Rasmussen's attention the rather large percentage of translators being received who are non-productive. Something must be done immediately in this field in order to make more of the available translators effective. I propose to have Rasmussen communicate directly with you on this problem.

It was quite apparent to me when I visited India, Ceylon, Southwest and Central Pacific that the document translation job, although being handled in an admirable manner in all areas, was not the best possible solution. The handling of documents of an immediate operational nature was being very well done in all theaters, considering the means available and the volume of documents falling into our hands. Document work of other types of material was not being so effectively done. With all theaters short of translators, there was some duplication of effort and translators in more than one theater were not infrequently working on material which had been completed in another theater. All theaters had such a backlog of material of this nature that it was perfectly apparent that it would never be possible to give any or all of them sufficient personnel to do this job and meet other urgent requirements for Japanese trained linguists. I consider the matter so important that I arranged for the British DMI to visit Washington and review the problem with us. We have set up and are getting in operation a unit which will be known as Japanese Military Intelligence Research Section. It will, in general, follow the lines of operation of the European MIRS which has been so successful in handling documents of the no immediate operational type.

It seemed to us that one of the first services MIRS could render to the theaters would be to determine what had been translated in each theater and furnish this information to the document units in all theaters. By carding this information and issuing periodic supplements, the information could be kept reasonably current in all theaters.

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The Air Ministry, Army Air Forces and Naval Air Forces have agreed to forward to Washington all documents pertaining to Japanese Army and Navy aviation as soon as they have served the immediate operational requirements of the theaters in which they were taken. Japanese MIRS would undertake to research these and get the results to all theaters promptly.

I had hoped that we could have an interservice and Inter-Allied Japanese document research section set up in Washington in which the American Naval, Ground and Air Services could work with certain British participation. The War Office and the War Department are in agreement as to the value of such an arrangement and have agreed to the necessary pooling of documents. The British Navy intelligence section has informally expressed approval of the idea. The American Navy has so far opposed the idea. Since both Japanese army and navy documentary material includes aviation and since large numbers of American Ground and Air Forces are operating in the Central Pacific Theater in Navy dominated areas, it is necessary that Japanese documents be pooled somewhere accessible to all services if best results are to be obtained. I am hopeful that in due course I can convince the Navy that this is the only proper solution. Until MIRS gets going effectively, it is unlikely that the Navy will consent to the desired pooling of documents. The document backlog in the Central Pacific is greater than that at your Headquarters with every indication that the situation will steadily get worse as we move deeper into Japanese territory. I see no solution other than that proposed above. Your comments and constructive recommendations will be greatly appreciated.

We are sending Colonel Bill Mayer on a trip to all theaters facing the Japanese. I believe his visit will be mutually beneficial to you and to us.

Please congratulate General MacArthur for me on his remarkable handling of the Leyte operation. As he indicated when I talked with him, the Leyte operation is apparently bringing about the decisive air and naval battle of the Pacific. In his competent hands, there can be no question as to the outcome of Army operations.

With kindest personal regards and very best wishes.

Sincerely,

CLAYTON BISSELL,  
Major General,  
A. C. of S., G-2.

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